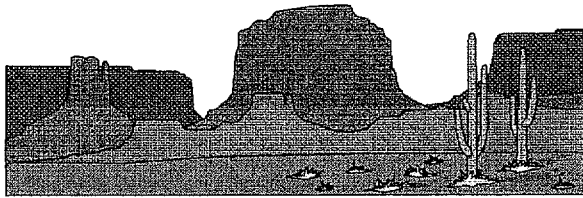


*SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS*



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## **DOUGLAS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT MASTER PLAN**

### **CHAPTER III: SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS**

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#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

Examining the specific socioeconomic character of the City of Douglas, Cochise County, and southeastern Arizona will determine the ability of the surrounding area to support aviation activity and to influence further development of the Douglas Municipal Airport. These characteristics, such as economic growth and industrial activity, demographic patterns, disposable personal income, geographic patterns and local aviation actions will all help in establishing the potential growth rate of the airport. In other words, by analyzing the information in this chapter, more accurate forecasts of aviation activity can be developed. Those forecasts will be provided in the following chapter.

#### **3.1 GEOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES**

The Douglas Municipal Airport, located just east of the City of Douglas, Arizona, is in the southeastern portion of the state along the United States and Mexico border. It's sister city, Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, lies immediately to the south. Other area communities include Bisbee, approximately 20 miles to the west, and Sierra Vista, approximately 45 miles west-northwest. The closest major metropolitan area is Tucson, approximately 117 miles northwest. The topography of the area around the Douglas Municipal Airport consists of desert plains and mountains. The climatic conditions of the area are very mild, with an annual average daily maximum temperature of 79.2°F and an annual average of 13.05 inches of precipitation.

#### **3.2 RECREATION AND TOURISM**

Numerous recreational and tourist sites in this area of Arizona attract many visitors and vacationers each year. These sites include the Chiricahua Mountains and Chiricahua National Monument, the historic town of Tombstone, the Coronado National Memorial, scenic Texas Canyon, and much more. Tourism of this region of Arizona has

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continually increased over the past several years, just as it has for the entire Southwestern United States. This recreation activity has not had a direct impact on operations at the Douglas Municipal Airport. However, several indirect consequences can be derived. For example, tourism in the area brings additional income to the City of Douglas in the form of increased sales and services.

### **3.3 SOCIOECONOMIC DATA**

Socioeconomic characteristics of an area such as population, employment, and economic data are important elements of an Airport Master Plan. These items are essential in determining the strength and ability of an area to support aviation activities now and in the future.

#### **3.3.1 Economy, Employment and Earnings**

Economy and Employment: Certain economic characteristics of a community help to identify the specific type of aviation activity common to the local area which distinguishes it from other airports. For example, one community's aviation activity may rely heavily on business travel by commercial and general aviation aircraft while still another may be dependent upon air freight transport to and from manufacturing and resource industries.

The City of Douglas' economy is heavily reliant upon international commerce and manufacturing. Because of the proximity to Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, Douglas has opened most of its 15 manufacturing plants under the Maquiladora, or "twin plant", program with Agua Prieta. Products include clothing, electronics, printing, and food processing. Manufacturing accounts for 24 percent of the employment in the Douglas area. Another 47 percent of the employment can be attributed to services for shoppers from Agua Prieta and the surrounding areas of Mexico, since it is estimated that 80 percent of personal income from the Maquiladoras is spent in Douglas. Table III-1 provides a listing of major employers near the City of Douglas and Agua Prieta, and Table III-2 provides some economic statistics for the City of Douglas, Cochise County and the State of Arizona.

**TABLE III-1**  
**MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN DOUGLAS, ARIZONA**  
**AND AGUA PRIETA, SONORA, MEXICO**

| EMPLOYER NAME      | NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES |             |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|
|                    | DOUGLAS             | AGUA PRIETA |
| White Knight       | 70                  | 400         |
| Zenith Electronics | 78                  | 1,000       |
| Bendix Safety      | 49                  | 850         |
| Gateway Industries | 14                  | 800         |
| Velcro USA, Inc.   | 23                  | 300         |
| Classic Coil       | 16                  | 300         |

*Source : Douglas Community Profile*

**TABLE III-2**  
**1990 - 1991 EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**  
**CITY OF DOUGLAS, COCHISE COUNTY, AND STATE OF ARIZONA**

|                            |      | CITY OF DOUGLAS | COCHISE COUNTY | STATE OF ARIZONA* |
|----------------------------|------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Total Civilian Labor Force | 1990 | 5,487           | 35,750         | 1,726.0           |
|                            | 1991 | 5,442           | 34,975         | 1,704.0           |
| Total Employment           | 1990 | 5,072           | 33,375         | 1,634.0           |
|                            | 1991 | 5,004           | 32,475         | 1,608.0           |
| Total Unemployment         | 1990 | 415             | 2,375          | 92.0              |
|                            | 1991 | 438             | 2,500          | 96.0              |
| Unemployment Rate          | 1990 | 7.6%            | 6.6%           | 5.3%              |
|                            | 1991 | 8.0%            | 7.1%           | 5.6%              |

*Source: 1993 Statistical Abstract of Arizona and Douglas Community Profile*

*\* Numbers are in millions for State of Arizona*

Douglas relies heavily on its proximity to Mexico and cooperates with Agua Prieta to build the economic base of both communities. The recent passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement

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(NAFTA) will enable both Douglas and Agua Prieta to strengthen these economic ties even more. The Douglas Municipal Airport stands to benefit from NAFTA, also, by gaining more opportunities to attract international operations. In fact, Douglas Municipal Airport has already attained International status and has U.S. Customs available for that purpose.

Earnings: The financial ability of a community's residents to travel by air and to support local aviation needs comes in part from the availability of disposable personal income. Therefore, it is important to examine income figures for the area in comparison to other regional characteristics. Income data for 1989 for Douglas and Cochise County is shown in Table III-3.

**TABLE III-3**  
**1989 INCOME DATA**  
**CITY OF DOUGLAS AND COCHISE COUNTY**

|                         | DOUGLAS  | COCHISE<br>COUNTY |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Personal Income         | *        | \$1,167,941       |
| Per Capita Income       | \$6,619  | \$12,010          |
| Median Household Income | \$14,994 | \$26,152          |

*Source: Arizona State Demographer's Office and 1993 Statistical Abstract of Arizona*

*\* Information not available.*

### 3.3.2 Population

The population of the City of Douglas has fluctuated over the past twenty years. From 1980 to 1990, Douglas' population decreased from 13,058 to 12,822. However, 1991 population was 13,237, regaining in one year the population lost over a ten year period. The 1990 population for Agua Prieta has been estimated to be between 80,000 and 110,000. Cochise County has seen a steady increase in population, from 85,700 in 1980 to 98,100 in 1990 for an annual percentage change of approximately 0.07 percent. Forecasted population data for the City of Douglas is not available, however Cochise County population forecasts are presented in Table III-4. Forecasts were obtained from the 1993 Statistical Abstract of Arizona.

**TABLE III-4**  
**HISTORICAL AND FORECASTED POPULATION DATA**  
**CITY OF DOUGLAS AND COCHISE COUNTY, ARIZONA**

| YEAR                  | HISTORICAL POPULATION |                |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                       | DOUGLAS               | COCHISE COUNTY |
| 1980                  | 13,058                | 85,700         |
| 1990                  | 12,822                | 98,100         |
| 1991                  | 13,237                | 99,575         |
| 1992*                 | 13,270                | 101,175        |
| 1993*                 | 14,945                | 103,325        |
| FORECASTED POPULATION |                       |                |
| COCHISE COUNTY        |                       |                |
| 1994                  |                       | 104,191        |
| 1995                  |                       | 105,671        |
| 1996                  |                       | 107,142        |
| 1997                  |                       | 108,591        |
| 1998                  |                       | 110,030        |
| 1999                  |                       | 111,455        |
| 2000                  |                       | 112,879        |
| 2001                  |                       | 114,307        |
| 2002                  |                       | 115,729        |
| 2005                  |                       | 119,974        |

*Source: 1993 Arizona Statistical Abstract*

*\* 1992 and 1993 population figures for both Douglas and Cochise County are estimates from the Arizona State Data Center (Department of Economic Security)*

*Note: 1990 population for Agua Prieta was approximately 80,000*

Market Area: Retail sales and services are provided by the City of Douglas to a much larger population group than the immediate community. In fact, the City of Douglas is rapidly becoming the retail and industrial center of Southeastern Arizona, reaching 209,000 people. Table III-5 shows the distribution of this market area for the City of Douglas.

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**TABLE III-5**  
**MARKET AREA OF THE CITY OF DOUGLAS**

| Description              | Population            |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Douglas area             | 19,000                |
| Bisbee                   | 8,000                 |
| Elfrida                  | 1,500                 |
| Rodeo                    | 500                   |
| <b><i>SUBTOTAL</i></b>   | <b><i>29,000</i></b>  |
| Nacozari                 | 45,000                |
| Agua Prieta              | 80,000                |
| Cananea                  | 35,000                |
| Surrounding              | 20,000                |
| <b><i>SUBTOTAL</i></b>   | <b><i>180,000</i></b> |
| <b>TOTAL MARKET AREA</b> | <b>209,000</b>        |

*Source: Douglas Economic Development Corporation*

### 3.4 SUMMARY

The future growth of the Douglas Municipal Airport is dependent upon many factors, including the economic stability, employment opportunities and population projections for the area. The most important factor for growth at the Douglas Municipal Airport is the continued success of the Maquiladora program and the expected benefits of the NAFTA. The twin-plant manufacturing operations with Agua Prieta and NAFTA will support the economic conditions of the area and are expected to create and support additional aviation activity. Moderate population growth is forecasted for Cochise County throughout the next several years. The promotion of recreational and tourist sites in the area such as the Chiricahua National Monument may also create a demand for increased retail trade activity in the area and also potential air travel. All of these factors may have a beneficial effect on the future growth of the Douglas Municipal Airport.